

# La Fiesta de Intercambio celebrates diversity

## Annual party moves to Longmont

By Kate Larsen

Camera Staff Writer

The biggest dance party of the year has a new location.

La Fiesta de Intercambio, one of the biggest and most diverse celebrations in the area, will move from Boulder to Longmont this year. The fourth annual party is tonight and features salsa dancing, live music and a silent auction to benefit the organizer, Intercambio de Comunidades.

"We really want to increase our exposure in Longmont," said Lee Shainis, executive director of Intercambio de Comunidades. "We're hoping it will tap into a new group of people who don't know about us."

The Boulder-based nonprofit group offers low-cost English

classes to immigrants. The organization, with more than 600 students and 130 volunteers, helps immigrants all over the county learn English, access resources and better integrate into American culture through social events.

The annual fiesta is the group's biggest fund-raiser.

Shainis said it's one of the few times people of all different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds get together for a celebration in Boulder County.

"It's a great chance for people of all backgrounds to meet and see each other and dance together," said Rodrigo Ordonez, an Intercambio teacher and board member who immigrated to the United States

from Mexico five years ago.

The dance floor is full all night, Ordonez said.

"It's probably the only place you'll see a 15-year-old Latino dancing with a 65-year-old Anglo," he said.

The party features food, a cash bar, Luis Canela from Univision television, the salsa band Conjunto Colores, DJ

Canelas and Chicos del Ritmo.

After three years at the Elks Lodge on 28th Street in Boulder, this year's fiesta will be at the Radisson Raintree Hotel in Longmont.

The event has sold out two of its three years.

"Our English classes get the most visibility because people can relate to that, but doing integrating things is another important part of the program," said Karla Rikansrud, development director for Intercambio de Comunidades. "A lot of immigrants don't get out and about and get to meet other people."

Contact Camera Staff Writer  
Kate Larsen at (303) 473-1361  
or [larsenk@dailycamera.com](mailto:larsenk@dailycamera.com).

## IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** La Fiesta de Intercambio, a fund-raiser for Intercambio de Comunidades, including food, dancing and entertainment

**WHEN:** Tonight, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**WHERE:** Radisson Raintree Hotel and Conference Center, 1900 Ken Pratt Blvd., Longmont

**COST:** \$18 in advance or \$25 at the door; advance tickets available